How Technology Effects Our World

By

Robert Aversa

&

Sayre Long

Robert Aversa + Sayre Long

Global Studies Honors pd. 9-10

Mr. McFadden

How Technology Effects Our World

Technology - the practical application of science to commerce or industry (as defined by wordnetweb.princeton.edu). It affects our everyday lives in so many ways: cultures, success, power, ability, and respect, are all defined by technology in one way or another. Technology allows people to have better, easier lives. It makes our countries safer. It surmounts problems that humans as a species would not be able to conquer without it. But what people do not think about is the other side, the affect that follows the cause, the negatives. “If we continue to develop our technology without wisdom or prudence, our servant may prove to be our executioner”, Omar N. Bradley. The fact that we can instantaneously talk to someone across the globe is nice, but the fact that our follies are destroying the planet we live on is not. The line between a beneficial necessity and a destructive desire for more is very thin.

Technology affects our world in several ways, but the main areas that are affected are the environment and the people who live here. Issues such as pollution or widespread obesity are the product of careless technology. Our newer, faster machines have been generating harmful gasses and compounds that destroy life and the nature of the Earth. Our easier, more convenient means of food have malnutured and corrupted our youth to unhealthy lifestyles by eating fast food and easy-made meals. Our servant is proving to be our executioner.

The first topic that is to be discussed is how technology affects people and society. Not only has it impacted the lifestyles of so many people, but it is an enabler for people to conduct unhealthy habits and to adopt destructive natures. The second topic that is to be discussed is how technology affects the environment. Global Warming is a very popular topic is politics, but the affects of technology go much farther than just the atmosphere.

Not to all technology is bad; while we well know that things such as matches and bikes are great inventions and significant advancements in technology. However, the cigarettes that those matches light, and all the roads those bikes ride on, are not the most beneficial to the Earth. The smoke and the transformation of the land have huge affects on the environment, similar to how nicotine and luxurious road trips affect the lives of people who conquer to the fashion of our technology-based world.

Society has been changing rapidly during the past few centuries. From what we eat, how we communicate, how we get around, technology is a huge part of our everyday lives. It is almost impossible to go through the day without using a cell phone, driving a modern car, or using some synthetic material. These applications of science are supposed to make our lives better, easier, smarter, more efficient. However, at what point does better become unnatural, easier become lazier, smarter become less intellectual, and more efficient become destructive? It seems that every new technology has a negative setback, but in our modern day, these setbacks are starting to outweigh the advantages.

A prime example of the negative side of advancements in food production technology is McDonald’s, the Golden Arches. Parents find the easy fix for lunch, children laugh and celebrate over the delicious occasion, and co-workers enjoy half hour lunches with convenience. These are advantages. What frequently goes overlooked, are the drawbacks: fast food is extremely unhealthy. Almost all fast food contains large amounts of fats and calories, not to mention that fast food does not provide the necessary balance needed in a meal.[[1]](#footnote-1) Most fast food is affordable, and undoubtedly easy, but it is enabling trends and habits in the people that are destructive.

One in three children between the ages of 4 and 19 eat fast food every day. [[2]](#footnote-2) This fast food puts on an average six pounds per year on children of those ages. These numbers were yielded by a survey of 6,212 young people conducted on fast food and obesity.[[3]](#footnote-3) Six pounds a year starts to add up on your waist, especially when these fast food eating habits are started in such young people. The numbers speak for themselves.

"The major guiding force in McDonald's technology deployment, as well as in other areas, is our 'Plan to Win,' a strategic roadmap for achieving our brand mission of being 'the customer's favorite place and way to eat," says Dave Weick, McDonald's senior vice president and chief information officer.[[4]](#footnote-4) Their “mission” seems to be working, along with the lovely side effects of eating food loaded with fats and calories.[[5]](#footnote-5) The twenty-seven million people who are served at McDonald’s each day in the United States[[6]](#footnote-6) are the reason why obesity has increased from 13.4% to 35.1% in the United States from 1960 to 2006.[[7]](#footnote-7) These statistics directly correspond to that of the number of fast food outlets. Statistics have shown a huge increase in the fast food industry since 1970 as the number of outlets goes from 30,000 in 1970 to about 220,000 by 2001.[[8]](#footnote-8) The evidence is too obvious to claim coincidence.

Fast food is an obvious product of advancements in technology. How fast food effects our society is also too obvious to overlook. The enormous rise in obesity and the poor eating habits that our world has adopted is unmistakably a product of this advancement in technology, and this is only the beginning.

People have been waging wars against each other since the beginning of time. There is a constant battle for power and control driven by greed or prejudice. There are also battles for freedom and safety, which do not come at a low price. Humanity values life, but technology has made it too easy for others to take what is valued most to people. Death is a part of life, however, the ways in which people die today should not be apart of any life we know.

August 6, 1945: Approximately 70,000 die within a day’s time. Three days later, another 40,000 people are subject to the same fate.[[9]](#footnote-9) The culprit: Engineered science researched and designed for only one purpose, to kill. These two events are known as the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Wars are full of death and are a part of humanity that we can not change. However, the evolution of war is spine chilling, and can be used as prime examples of how technology is a monster on target for destruction. Most of the people killed in Japan in August of 1945 were not aggressors hungry for blood. They were people just like you and me who fell victim to a terrible offspring of technology.

“Hiroshima and Nagasaki were small cities, and by today's standards the bombs dropped on them were small bombs.”[[10]](#footnote-10) This statement says enough. Technology has advanced further than it was when it killed over a hundred thousand people in a week. The extent of this horror is almost unbelievable. “In the span of a lunch hour, one multi-warhead nuclear missile can destroy more cities than all the incendiary raids in history, and the only thing the combatant needs to do to carry off such a horror is to sit in air-conditioned comfort hundreds or even thousands of miles away, and push a button.”[[11]](#footnote-11) This is the world we live in today, and one day, someone might decide to push that button and our entire world as we know it, our entire life, would change. When is enough going to be enough? Technology has put the fate of humanity is the hands of whoever seeks the power to control it. Perhaps being blasted back to the Stone Age is exactly what our world needs…

People today rely on technology. Technology is what determines who you are and how much you are worth. It is a system of numbers and rules, and we are only pieces of data. So what happens when the numbers get lost or messed up? In 1929 when the stock market crashed many businessmen and stock investors committed suicide because they feared the debt they were about to fall into.[[12]](#footnote-12) The following year, 23,000 people committed suicide.[[13]](#footnote-13) Thousands lost their jobs. Farmers lost their farms. This mess up, this glitch in the system, cost people their lives, their family businesses, and their identities.

It is no different today. A number on a bank receipt can be the difference between never having to work again or knowing the rest of your life is going to be labor. This technology is what gives a person his or her identity. A profile in a police record or a name on a bank account is what owns your identity. Technology has taken the identity of the individual, the person, and has turned it into a social security number or a name in a database, making our whole society a system of numbers and rules.

Technology is slowly burying our history as people. In 1776 there were 56 signatures on a piece of paper that made history and bore the future of our country. Signatures, names, are what validated that declaration. The men who signed that declaration were great individuals who took it upon themselves to speak out freely not because it was their duty or job but because they were free people. In this day and age things are different. It is not the person who signs the papers or who steps forward, it is the position, only what the person represents. Barack Obama is no more of a person than you or I, it is only his position that makes him important. In our world today, it is the title that acquires a person to fill it, not the person that earns a title. The system of our society has a specific structure that must be appeased and it is only by the role which we play that our value comes.

1. "Fast Food Effects On Health." Home. Web. 05 May 2010. <http://healthfood-guide.com/fastfood.aspx> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Holguin, Jaime. "Fast Food Linked To Child Obesity - CBS News." Breaking News Headlines: Business, Entertainment & World News - CBS News. 5 Jan. 2005. Web. 18 May 2010. <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2004/01/05/health/main591325.shtml> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Holguin, Jaime [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. "Innovation Is on the Menu: Technology Moves McDonald's Forward | Nation's Restaurant News | Find Articles at BNET." Find Articles at BNET | News Articles, Magazine Back Issues & Reference Articles on All Topics. 11 Apr. 2005. Web. 19 May 2010. <http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\_m3190/is\_15\_39/ai\_n27855108/>. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. "Fast Food Effects On Health." [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. "McDonald's: The Secret of Their Success." Diet Blog: Eat Right, Get Healthy. Web. 18 May 2010. <http://www.diet-blog.com/07/mcdonalds\_the\_secret\_of\_their\_success.php> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. "WIN - Statistics." Welcome to WIN - The Weight-control Information Network. Web. 18 May 2010. <http://www.win.niddk.nih.gov/statistics/index.htm>. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Paeratakul, S. "Fast Food Consumption and Dietary Intake Profiles - Fast Food | Nutrition Research Newsletter | Find Articles at BNET." Find Articles at BNET | News Articles, Magazine Back Issues & Reference Articles on All Topics. 2003. Web. 18 May 2010. <http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\_m0887/is\_11\_22/ai\_111023412/?tag=content;col1> [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. "The Atomic Bombing of Hiroshima, August 6, 1945." Department of Energy - CFO Home. Web. 18 May 2010. <http://www.cfo.doe.gov/me70/manhattan/hiroshima.htm>. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Hoffman, Russell. "THE EFFECTS OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS by Russell D. Hoffman." The Animated Software Company. 1999. Web. 19 May 2010. <http://www.animatedsoftware.com/environm/no\_nukes/tenw/nuke\_war.htm>. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Hoffman, Russell [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. "The Effects of a Stock Market Crash." HubPages. Web. 19 May 2010. <http://hubpages.com/hub/The-effects-of-a-Stock-Market-Crash>. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. "The Effects of a Stock Market Crash." [↑](#footnote-ref-13)